

May 9, 2005

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
Room 383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012



Dear Supervisors:

Marcia Mayeda  
Director

Administrative Office  
5898 Cherry Ave.  
Long Beach, CA 90805  
(562) 728-4882  
Fax (562) 422-3408  
<http://animalcontrol.co.la.ca.us>



Shelter locations

11258 S. Garfield Ave.  
Downey, CA 90242  
(562) 940-6898

216 W. Victoria St.  
Gardena, CA 90248  
(310) 523-9566

4275 No. Elton  
Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
(626) 962-3577

5210 W. Avenue I  
Lancaster, CA 93536  
(661) 940-4191

31044 N. Charlie Cyn. Rd.  
Castaic, CA 91384  
(661) 257-3191

29525 Agoura Rd.  
Agoura, CA 91301  
(818) 991-0071

On April 19, the Board adopted a motion by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich directing our department to work with the Chief Administrative Office to prepare a response to the growing number of serious dog attacks in the Antelope Valley. We have worked closely with the CAO's office. This letter, drafted in consultation with the Chief Administrative Office, offers our response to the Board motion.

Already during 2005, our agency has responded to 15 dangerous or vicious animal incidents, including a very serious attack that occurred in the Quartz Hill community in March, which prompted the Board-adopted motion. During all of 2004, there were only five such attacks, so this year's year-to-date statistics represent a 300 percent increase over 2004, and the summer months - traditionally the time when such incidents are more likely to occur - have yet to arrive.

The problem is not the adequacy of existing laws. Current dangerous dog suppression laws, including those adopted by the Board previously, are well designed to handle the situation. Likewise, the problem is not prosecution. Our agency has a good working relationship with the District Attorney's office and has been successful in getting irresponsible pet owners prosecuted and convicted. In fact, based on our department's investigation, the District Attorney's office has filed a felony charge against the owners of the pit bull involved in the March attack.

Based on the number and severity of incidents, our agency believes that two related steps need to be taken. One involves a public education and community awareness campaign aimed at promoting compliance with animal control laws and increased reporting of suspect animals. We have initiated discussions with city representatives from Lancaster and Palmdale to include these cities' concerns in the action plans we develop for the Antelope Valley. My department is in the process of developing this campaign.

The other step, which we regard as the most crucial, is to increase enforcement by adding staffing to our Lancaster Animal Shelter, which serves the entire Antelope Valley. Actual field enforcement of animal control laws is the key to intervention before attacks happen. By having a stronger presence in the community, proactive enforcement of animal control laws will allow us to better prevent and more quickly respond to these dangerous situations.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

Honorable Board of Supervisors  
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The population surge in the Antelope Valley has also necessitated more services from my department to address related animal issues.

After studying this matter, we believe we must increase the shelter's field staff by at least four field officers. We also need one additional animal shelter aid to help field a growing number of service requests coming to the shelter.

The annual cost of this staff expansion, including salaries and benefits, would be \$245,412.22, including \$34,148.86 for an Animal Shelter Aid position to assist in handling the increased call volume coming to the shelter and \$211,263.36 for four Animal Control Officer I field positions to increase enforcement patrols in the Antelope Valley.

The CAO has given us approval to fill these positions immediately with our current budget savings, and will be increasing our 2005-2006 budget request to reflect the cost of these additional positions.

If you have any questions about this matter, please feel free to call me at (562) 728-4610.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Mayeda", is centered on a light yellow rectangular background.

Marcia Mayeda  
Director

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Office  
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer